



## THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

### **Emergency Water Regulations SDMC 67.38 Variance Request: Alternative for Large Landscapes (Pilot)**

#### **Guidelines**

##### Introduction

In compliance with the City of San Diego's long term water reliability goals, the City is working with customers to reduce the use of potable water while still maintaining the quality of life important to the region. The City imports the majority of its potable water, nearly half of which is ultimately used on the landscape. The Alternative for Large Landscape (ALL) is an opportunity for the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department (PUD) to work with its large landscape irrigation customers to benefit the region's environment while meeting the City's conservation goals.

##### Purpose

The (ALL) allows qualified City of San Diego PUD's large landscape irrigation customers to achieve desired water savings while giving the customers the flexibility to protect landscapes that are a business necessity, support active or passive recreation or public benefit such as parks, golf courses, sports fields, schools and cemeteries. The ALL sets a water budget for each participating meter that is 5% more restrictive than the water use reduction in place as set by the Mayor. A participating irrigation meter does not have to abide by the time-of-day or days-of-the-week restrictions through Level 3 of the Emergency Water Use Restrictions for as long as the assigned water budget is met. This added flexibility allows the customer to deliver water to the landscape on a customized schedule in response to plant needs and programmatic restrictions. The water budget for each site will be based on the Maximum Allowable Water Allowance formula (MAWA) as defined in Assembly Bill 1881 (AB 1881).

##### Qualification:

Qualifying customers must have a City of San Diego Irrigation classification meter receiving potable or raw water, servicing landscapes that are a business necessity, support active or passive recreation or public benefit such as parks, golf courses, sports fields, schools and cemeteries. The site must be at least 3 acres in size. Customers must be in good standing with the PUD, and agree to access to their property for measurement of landscape areas.

##### Process:

- Customer submits a tentative application (see attached) with a processing fee to the PUD. The fee covers administration and field staff review. Enrollment periods are December 1 – 31 and May 1 – 31 with the start date being either January 1<sup>st</sup> or June 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Customer provides a landscape area measurement (LAM) for each participating irrigation meter. The Customer and PUD must agree on the LAM for turf and non-turf areas.
- PUD provides an annual budget to the customer per site.
- Customer agrees to the budget and officially enrolls in the program effective the next full billing period after acceptance. The Customer returns the signed water budget back to the City.
- PUD and Customer monitor month-to-month performance/adherence to the water budget for the first 12 months.
- PUD sends a written warning to customer the first time the rolling 12 month budget is exceeded (after first year). A rolling 12-month budget is defined as twelve consecutive months (including billing period month) immediately prior to the billing month under evaluation.
- PUD removes customer from program the second time the rolling 12 month budget is exceeded within a given three year time period.
- If a customer is removed from the program, due to failure to meet the approved budget, they may not apply for a variance for twelve (12) months following the notification of removal.
- After the annual contract ends the customer may opt out of the ALL by notifying the City.

The application will include accurate measurements of landscape areas (LAM) categorized as turf or non-turf areas serviced with potable or raw water. The application will also identify ornamental ponds and irrigation reserves. The LAM of ornamental ponds will be included in the budget if serviced by an irrigation meter.

Water Conservation staff will review the application and LAMs to determine if City data aligns with the information provided. If provided LAM differs from City data, then a site visit will be requested. City staff will visit the subject property and review plant material type and measurements with the property representative. The Customer and the City Staff will agree on the measurement prior to setting water budgets.

#### Water Budget Calculation:

The resulting measurements will be applied to the following calculation:

For Potable/Raw Water Meters:

$$[LAMt * ETo * PF * (1 - Lvl - .05) + LAMnt * ETo * PF * (1 - Lvl - .05)] * .62 = \text{Irrigation Budget (gallons)}$$

Definition:

LAM=Landscape Area Measure in square feet

LAMt = special landscape area turf in square feet.

LAMnt=turf in non special use areas and all other plant material areas in square feet. Turf is defined as grass necessary for the function of the business, i.e., greens, tees and fairways for golf; passive and active playing fields for Park and Recreation.

ETo=Annual Reference Evapotranspiration reported in inches. The initial calculation will use ETo based on California Irrigation Management Information

System weather stations' (CIMIS) annual historical data. Budget used to determine final consumption will be based on actual monthly ETo information as recorded by CIMIS.

PF=Plant Factor of 1.0 for turf used in Special Landscape Areas PF =0.8 for all other areas.

Lvl=Current Drought Level reduction measured in a percent (ex. 20% = .20)

Irrigation Budget=Custom annual budget for a specific landscape (may involve multiple meters) in gallons

The resulting sum will refer to the total water budget per year for the site. Compliance will be measured across the entire site and not by individual meter. A further breakdown by month will provide guideline water consumption for each month pro-rated to the billing period. (Refer to attached worksheet of sample property)

Based on the annual budget, the applicant's property will achieve the water budget for each rolling twelve months, i.e., while any given billing period may not comply with the guideline budget, a twelve month total must, at any time after the first year, be at or below the annual budget. The monthly budgets will be for the customer's reference and a guideline for City staff to work with customers who appear to be falling out of compliance.

Failure to meet the annual budget will result in a written warning on first occurrence. The second failure within a three year period will result in removal from the program for a minimum of 12 months. An appeal may be submitted for the occurrence of a natural or man-made disaster that results in supply line breaks or unplanned use of water. An adjusted budget will be temporarily approved and failure to meet the original budget will not be held against the applicant property. The Department and applicant will determine the appropriate length of deviation from the budget in order to restore the property to a fully functional state.

The customer will receive the annual budget along with a letter agreement via electronic delivery. The budget will be enforced upon receipt of a signed copy of the letter agreement by the City of San Diego Water Conservation Program. Until the signed agreement is received by the City, the customer must comply with all current level Restrictions.

The ALL Program will be re-evaluated three years from commencement of pilot, with recommendations for changes and continuation of the program assessed and presented to the City Council.